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### THE NAMES OF SEASONS OF THE YEAR IN IRANIAN LANGUAGES<sup>1</sup>

The earliest references concerning the Iranian seasons of the year are to be found in the *Avesta* and many religious texts of the Middle Persian literature: *Bundahišn*, *Dēnkard* and *Āfrīnagān gāhambār*. In *Yasna*, we find a description of a land called *Aryana Vaejah*, the cradle of the Aryan people, probably somewhere in the southern regions of the Central Asian steppes. The climate of this region was extremely cold: "In *Aryana Vaejah*, winter lasts 10 months, summer (also very cold) 2 months".<sup>2</sup> "In the northern direction, where the preparation of winter is, it is always cold; for in the summer mostly, on account of the more oppressive winter there; it is not possible so to dispel the cold that one might make it quite warm. In the middle localities the cold of winter and heat of summer both came on vehemently." (Bd. 25.16-17).<sup>3</sup>

Since the life in this land had been very hard (climatic changes, aggressive neighbours from the north) and the Aryans had heard about fertile grounds in the south, where people were rich, summer was long and hot, and winter was easy to survive, they started to move southwards. Some of them settled down in the Iranian plateau, and called this land after the country of their ancestors *Aryana*. The climate in *Aryana* was really much better and hot, as we read in the *Bundahišn*: "As from the auspicious day *Aūharmazd* of the month *Frawardīn* to the auspicious day *Anīrān* of the month *Mitrō* is the summer of seven months, so from the auspicious day *Aūharmazd* of the month *Āvān* to the auspicious month *Spendarmad*, on to the end of the five supplementary days, is the winter of five months"<sup>4</sup> (Bd 25.7). This opposition of summer and winter, life and death, was the base of the life philosophy of those Iranians who came to the Near East from the land of underground abodes – shelters (*var*), where they

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<sup>1</sup> This text was published for the first time in Polish in *Iranica Cracoviensia*, *Cracow Iranian Studies in memory of Władysław Duleba*, Kraków 1996, pp. 95-112.

<sup>2</sup> F. Joneydi, *Zarvān, Sanješ-e zamān dar Irān-e bāstān* (*Zarvan, chronologie en Iran ancien*), Tehran 1358 (1979), pp. 22-24.

<sup>3</sup> E. W. West, *The Bundahishn, Sacred Books of the East*, vol. 5, Oxford, 1897, p. 96.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 94.

lived during severe winters. The second group of Aryans, which set out towards the Indian peninsula, also had known two seasons of the year: winter (*himā*) and summer (*sāmā*). When they moved southwards and started to settle down in lands where the climate was much varied, they began to single out other seasons: spring (*vasantā*) and autumn (*śarād*) and the wet season (*varṣa*). Even today, in Penjab, the year is divided into three seasons: winter, summer and the wet season. In Vedic literature, one can find a division of the year into six seasons: *vasantā* 'spring', *grīṣma* 'summer', *varṣa* 'the wet season', *śarād* 'autumn', *hemantā* 'winter', *śiśira* 'the cold season – the last part of winter'.<sup>5</sup> We find a similar division of the year into six seasons of two months each in the medical texts, translated from Sanskrit into the Khotan-Saka language: *hamāña rva* 'summer seasons' (equal to Skr. *prāṇṛd* 'rainy season'), *paśāṃjsya rva* 'autumn seasons' (Skr. *śarād* 'autumn'), *ysumāña rva* 'winter seasons' (Skr. *hemantā* 'winter'), *ṇa'stya ysumāṃ bisā rva* 'end of winter seasons' (Skr. *śiśira* 'latter part of winter'), *pasālya rva* 'spring seasons' (Skr. *vasantā* 'spring'), *ṇa'stya pasāṃjsya rva* 'spring like seasons' (Skr. *nidāgha* 'hot season').<sup>6</sup> In a passage of Ravigupta's *Siddhasāra* ("The perfect selection") that is not translated from the Sanskrit or Tibetan, the seasons in the sixfold division are counted from the middle of the first month. However, only four of them have special names in Khotanese. This may be an indigenous division. That is why we can assume that the division into six seasons (with the wet and the cold seasons) was typical only of Old Indian.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup> M. P. Nilsson, *Primitive time reckoning*, Lund 1920, p. 73.

<sup>6</sup> A. Panaino, Pre-Islamic Calendars, *EI*, pp. 666-7.

<sup>7</sup> "The people among whom Zoroaster preached his new religion and founded the first Mazdayasnian community (whom we may conveniently call "the Avestan people"), on the other hand, appear to have had a totally different system of time reckoning which, there are strong reasons to believe, was an ancient form of the Iranian calendar of early Aryan (probably north-eastern) origin and of a rural character, beginning with or about the summer solstice. This calendar which we shall call in the following pages Old-Avestan has, in many respects, great similarity with the oldest Indian (Vedic) calendar and in some aspects also with the post-Vedic calendar, and both (the Indian and Avestan) may have had a common origin. The year of the Old-Avestan calendar, which seems to have been called *yār*, appears to have been first divided into two main parts, from the summer solstice (*maidyoīšama* or mid-summer) to the winter solstice (*maidvāīrya* or mid-year) and vice versa, exactly like the old Vedic year, which was also originally divided in the same way into two *ayanas* (*uttarāyana* and *dakṣiṇāyana*). The further division of the year in later times in India into more and shorter seasons (*ṛitu*) up to six in number, which took place there gradually, has also great resemblance to the similar division of the year into six seasons (*yāīrya rataṇvō*) or *gāhs* among the kindred race of the Iranians, though the Iranian seasons, unlike the Indian, were of unequal length. This later and gradual division of

It must be granted as a premise to our investigation that when we speak of ‘seasons’, not only the larger divisions of the year are to be understood by the word, but also smaller divisions, which might perhaps be called seasonal points, as in the case of religious festivals. Moreover, looking for the origins of the names of seasons one must study not only the problem of *gāhambārs*, but also the Old Iranian words denoting ‘year’. The fusion of various seasons into the circle of the year arrived at only by degrees: the year was at first counted by the *pars pro toto* method.

### Winter

Although all the names of seasons of the year in Iranian languages are undoubtedly affiliated to Indo-European stock, from the semantic point of view, they are in many cases innovations. The original meaning of all Iranian names of seasons was connected with concrete, observable phenomena: cold, hot, light, verdure, blossom, etc. Of all the currently recognized four seasons of the year ‘winter’ is the one where one sees the most impressive agreement in the words denoting it in all Iranian languages (also in all the main branches of the IE family, except Germ.<sup>8</sup>), pointing unmistakably to the Indo-European word for ‘winter’ *\*ghei-men: ghimn-*<sup>9</sup> (P 425), *\*ghei-m* (full grade in N.Sg.), *\*ghi-m* (reduced grade in Gen.Sg.); cf. Skr. *himā-* ‘winter’, *himá-* ‘cold, snow’, *himya-* (adj.) ‘snowy’, *hemantá-* ‘winter’, *héman* (Loc.) ‘in winter’, Hitt. *gimmanta-* ‘winter’, Gr. *χεῖμα* (n.) ‘winter, cold’, *χειμὼν* (m.) ‘winter weather, storm’, Lat. *hiēms*, OPruss. *semo*, BSl. *\*žeimā*, ChSl. *zima*, Lith. *žiemà*.

As far as the Indo-Aryan period is concerned, the earliest division of the year was presumably one into two seasons, ‘winter’ and ‘non-winter’. The Avestan year was also primarily divided into a summer (*ham*) of seven months and a winter (*zyam*) of five. Spring and autumn seem not to be recognized then.

In Avestan Gathas we find such forms as: *zyam-*: *zim* (m.) ‘winter (dampness of the ground)’ (N.Sg. *zyā̃*, *zā̃*, Acc.Sg. *zyam-ča*, *zqm*, Gen.Sg. *zimō*, *zyā-mō*, *zāmo* < *\*ghi-m-os*<sup>10</sup>) (B 1699). In Young Avestan: *zayan-*, *zāēn* (m.) ‘winter’ (B 1666), and an adjective *zayana-* ‘of winter, wintry’ (cf. OInd. *hāyana-*

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the year in both countries certainly took place as a consequence of the climatic change encountered by Indo-Aryans and Iranians during their migration southwards, and hence the difference in the way of division.” (Taqizadeh, *Old Iranian Calendars*, pp. 14-15).

<sup>8</sup> General Germ. *wintrus* ‘wet season’, Goth. *wato*, Eng., Germ. *winter* (WP 1.253, Buck 1014).

<sup>9</sup> Perhaps from the IE root *\*ghei-*: *ghi-* ‘to hurry, press forward, hurl’ (P 424).

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Lat. *bīmus* < *\*bi-himos* ‘(lit. of two winters) biennial’ (*\*dwi-him-os* < *\*ghi-m-os* Gen.Sg.).

‘year, yearly’ on the analogy of *hamana* ‘of summer’) with the suffix of adjectives *-an/-n* appeared. The third form, also Young Avestan, is *zəma-ka-* ‘storm, snow-storm’, built from Gen.Sg. *zəmə* with the suffix *-aka-* (forming adjectives).

In Old Persian, the language of the south-western group of the Iranian languages, PIE *\*ǵh* (the palatal stop, that became sibilant in PAr. *žh*, then appeared in Skr. as *h* and in Av. *z*) became *d*. Unfortunately, there is no evidence for the name of winter in any of the Old Persian inscriptions. This name should have been *\*dam* or *\*dim*. The Middle Persian word *damistān*<sup>11</sup> is the only trace that this name must have existed (Denkart 8, Bundahišn 25.7), NP *zəməstān* is borrowed from the northern languages, in the Middle Persian period: *zam-* ‘cold’, *zamistān* ‘winter’. The suffix *-estān* builds the names of place and time: *gol-estān* ‘garden of roses’, *Tājikestān* ‘the land of Tajiks’, *tābestān* ‘summer (time of heating)’. The word *zəməstān* appeared for the first time in the *Bundahišn*. The same form is to be found in Kurdish: *zəməstān* (and also *barfəstān* ‘the season of snow’), Luristani: *zamistān*, and the Pamir dialects, Shugni: *zemistun*, Bartangi *zemiston*. The rest of the Iranian languages have the names for winter based on OIr. *zyam-*: *zim* with different suffixes: *-na*: KhS *ysumi* < *\*ysumāna*, Sar. *zəmun* ‘snow’, *zaman* ‘winter’, Wakhi *zəm*, *zam*, Pashto *zimai*, Yaz. *zin*; with the suffix *-aka*: Sogd. *\*zamāk* (*zm’k*), Oss. *zymæg* (*zima-ka*), Par. *zəmak*, Orm. *zimak*, *zəmak*.

In the Old Iranian languages, there is also a neutrum *yār-* ‘year’, *yāiryā* ‘yearly’, which must have denoted primarily one of the seasons. Most of the words for year in the IE languages are cognate with words for time, or a fixed period of time, including terms for various seasons of the year. The fusion of various seasons into the year’s circle was arrived at only by degrees: the year was at first calculated by the *pars pro toto* method (cf. Nilsson 45-6). In the case of *zəma*, the situation was the same. This word was also used in the meaning ‘year’: *θrisatō.zəma* ‘three hundred years’ (cf. Skr. *śatām himāh* ‘a hundred years’, *hāyanā-* ‘year’). In this meaning, *zəma* was used only in the plural to *yār* ‘year’. One must remember that ‘year’ does not denote only the calendar year, with its fixed beginning and end; year is also any period of time of the same number of days, beginning on any fixed day. Therefore the Avestan year might have had two or three synonymous names. If we consider the etymology of *yār*, we will see that in the Iranian languages this word was primarily used in the meaning ‘winter’, and was a synonym of *zəma*. Old Iranian *yār* (Av. and OP *dušiyāra-* ‘evil year, bad harvest, famine’: *duš-* + *yār-* ‘year’ made thematic, Av. *yār-*, PIE *\*yā-ro* (Skr. *yā-*, *yāti* ‘to go’) has its equivalent in many IE languages: Goth. *jer*, Germ. *Jahr*, Eng. *year*, Gr. *ōpa* ‘season’, Lat. *hora* ‘period of

<sup>11</sup> NP *dame* ‘wind and snow’, and also *damistān* the name for winter in the Kumzari language (spoken at the coast of the Ohrmazd Strait).

time, hour', Sl. *jar*, *jarica*, *jarina* 'spring wheat, rye, corn', Czech *jaro* 'spring'. The various uses of this word in these languages suggest that its original meaning in the PIE period, was more generic: 'passing time', 'period of time', 'season', 'winter (for Iranians)', 'spring (for Slavonic people)', and then *pars pro toto* 'year'. The additional evidence for the use of this word in the meaning 'winter' is the name of one *gāhambār*: *maidyāirya* ('mid-year'). These were days of religious feasting, held in the middle of the year, on the winter solstice, in the middle of the winter which lasted for five months.<sup>12</sup>

In Avestan there is also a third synonym for winter: *aiwi.gama-* (m.), that was later also used to denote 'year'. This form derives from the verbal root *gam-* 'to come'. Middle Persian and New Persian *hangām* 'time' can be traced back to the Avestan phrase: *hazañrēm aiwi.gāmanqm* 'a thousand winters (years)' (B 89).

<sup>12</sup> The Late Avestan (probably Sasanian) text *Āfrīnagān gāhambār* 3.2, 7-12 mentions six seasonal holidays (*gāhambār*): *maidyōizarəmayā* 'midspring', *maidyōišəma* 'midsummer', *paitiš.hahya* 'harvest (feast of bringing in the corn)', *ayāθrima* 'return of the cattle from the pastures (feast of home-coming)', *maidyāirya* 'midyear', *hamaspaθmaēdayā* 'time of bestrimment'. "The Old-Avestan year began, as already stated, with *maidyōišəma* or the summer solstice, and was presumably of 360 days with two parts, each of 180 days, like the Indian *ayanas*. The second part began accordingly with *maidyāirya*, near the winter solstice. The very name of this *gāhambār*, which certainly means mid-year with its description or its epithet in the Avesta indicating «the cold bringer» (*Visperad* 1.2, 2.2), testifies to the year's commencing with summer. Also there is in *Yasht* 8.36, perhaps further support in favor of this theory. It is said there that when (or after) 'the year (again) comes to the end for men the counselor princes (? chieftains) and the wild animals, (who) house in the mountains and the shy (animals who) graze (or wander) in the plains, watch (when it (the Tishtrya) is in) rising'. The Tishtrya, which is generally held to be Sirius, had its first heliacal rising in July in the first half of the first millennium BC (in north-eastern Iran it rose about 26th-27th July, i.e. four weeks after the solstice). Thus the people might have been waiting and longing impatiently for this rain-bringing star in the first days of the summer. The epithets of the other *gāhambār*s, as well as the attributes by which they are qualified in the Avesta, also all agree with these supposed positions of *maidyōišəma* and *maidyāirya*. Again, the verse of the *Vendidad* (18.9) which refers to *Maršhavan*, 'who could through his wrong religion seduce one to commit the sin of not having devoted (neglecting to devote) himself to the study [of the holy text], continuously for a period comprising three springs (*θrizaremaəm*),' deserves attention. Could it not be interpreted as suggesting that the spring was the last part of the year, and with the third spring, a period of three full years was completed, which would mean that the year began with summer?" (Taqizadeh, *Old Iranian Calendars*, pp. 15-16).

### Summer

The second recognized season of the year was ‘non-winter’, in other words ‘the hot, warm season’. In Old and Middle Iranian languages, also in some New Iranian, this season is called *ham*, *hamin*. This form derives from PIE *\*sem-*, *\*sem-ós* (Gen.Sg.) ‘summer’ (with a thematic suffix *-ā*: *\*semā*, or *-r*: *\*semer*) (P 905). The inherited group of words in IE languages: OHG *sumar*, OEng. *sumor*, Celt. *sam*, *samrad* ‘summer’, Skr. *sāmā* (f.) ‘half-year, season, rarely: summer’ (KEWA 473), Arm. *am* ‘year’, *amain* ‘summer’. The Avestan summer of seven months was later divided into spring and summer (each of three months) and autumn of one (other two months of autumn were taken from winter).

Young Avestan: *ham*:- *°šm-* (m.), Gen.Sg. *hamō*, Ins.Sg. *hamo*, *hāmina* (adj.) ‘summer’. In one compound also *šam-* (zero grade): *maidyoī.šama*<sup>13</sup> ‘the middle of summer’ (one of the *gāhambārs*), a religious feast of the summer solstice. Unfortunately, in the Old Persian inscriptions no name for summer was recorded. This name can be found in Middle Iranian literature: MP *hāmēn*, Sogd. *\*haman*, (‘*mynny*’), KhS *hamāna* ‘summer’ (but: *hamārrīnji* ‘the third month of spring’), and in New Iranian languages: Kurd. *hāvin*, but mostly in the eastern group, where this word means ‘summer’ and ‘autumn’: Pashto *manai* ‘autumn’, Sar. *menj* (*\*hamin-aka*) ‘summer and autumn’, Yaz. (*h*)*amang* ‘summer’. In Middle Persian, beside *hāmēn*, there came into being another word, built on analogy to *zimestān*, a new word for summer: *tābsetān* (based on the present stem *tāb-* of the verb *tāftan*, *tābidan* ‘to shine, to heat’, cf. Av. *tap-* ‘to be warm’, *tafsa-* ‘to become warm’, Av. *tafnu-* ‘fever’, OInd. *tāpati*, Lat. *tepeō*, Pol. *topić*, *ciepły* ‘hot’, PIE *\*tep-* ‘to become warm’ (WP 1.718). This word replaced in the course of time *hāmēn*.

### Spring

The third season, which seems to be recognized, then was spring MP *vahār*, NP *bahār* < OP *\*vāhara-*, which is attested only in a compositum: *θura.vāhara* ‘(month) of strong spring’ (April-May in OP calendar) (Kent 108); OP *θūra-* ‘strong’, Av. *sūra-*, Skr. *śūra*, PIE *\*kūr-o* and *-vāhara-*<sup>14</sup> ‘spring time’, OInd. *vāsarā-* ‘day’, *vāsto-* ‘morning’, *vasan-ta* (m.) ‘spring’ < *\*ues-en-to* ‘spring’, Lith. *vāsara* ‘summer’, AR. *\*vas-r*, PIE *\*ues-r*. Avestan neutrum *vañhar-*<sup>15</sup> ‘spring’, *vañri* (Loc.Sg.) < *\*vasri* also derives directly from PIE *\*ues-*

<sup>13</sup> Av. *maidya-* ‘middle’, OInd. *mādhyā-*, Lat. *medius* (B 1773).

<sup>14</sup> *Vriddhi* as a factor in the second component of a compound (cf. Kent, p. 44).

<sup>15</sup> *ñh* is an allophone of *h* < *\*s* found before *r* and *a* (cf. Hoffmann, Forssman, 106).

*r/n-*, \**ues-n-es* (Gen.Sg.) ‘bright, early time (of a day or year)’ (P 1174, B 1348). Ir. \**vāhar-* is related to Skr. *vāsarā* ‘day’, *vāsto* ‘in the morning’ < *vāstu* ‘brightness, morning’, *vasantā-* ‘spring’, Lith. *vāsara* ‘summer’, Lat. *vēr*, Sl. *vesna*, Arm. *garun* ‘spring’, Irish *errach*. In other Iranian languages and dialects this word has its continuation: Sogd. *wartī* (*wrtyy*) (Gh. 10185), Oss. *walzæg*, *walzygon* (adj.) < *walʒ-ak* < \**wārti-ak* < \**waharti-ak* (where *-ak* is secondary, as in *zymæg* ‘winter’) (Abaev 4, 46), Kurd. *vehār*, Zaza *wasāri*, Talishi *əvəsor*, Pashto *wōṛrai* ‘summer’, and in the dialects spoken in Pamir: Munji *wōṛo* ‘summer’, Sar. *wug* < \**wāhrt* ‘spring’. Spring was the third, established season, after winter and summer. The words denoting it must have been used not in its strictly nowadays meaning beginning with the vernal equinox and ending with the summer solstice, but as in a common parlance, for the period of verdure and blossom or the beginning of the year. Ir. *vahar-* first denoted ‘a bright, early season (spring or summer)’. But when the circle of the year was divided into four equal seasons, they named the first season *vahar*. This season was very important for Iranians, who associated it with revival, rebirth and resuscitation. When we analyse the names of six Zoroastrian festivals – *gāhambārs*, we see that three of them: *maiḍyōišəma* ‘midsummer’, *maiḍyāīrya* ‘midyear’ and *maiḍyōīzarəmayā* ‘midspring’ must have been celebrated in the middle of certain seasons. This last festival took place exactly in the middle of spring, which lasted for three months (40 days after the beginning of the year, on the tenth day of the second month). *Maiḍyōīzarəmayā* lit. ‘mid-greenness’, as Av. *zarmaya-* ‘spring’, *zaramaya-* ‘green, of spring’. This word derives from PIE \**ǵhel-en* (\**ǵhel-*: *ǵhl-* ‘to shine, light’) ‘of bright colours: yellow-green colour’ (as these colours were not recognized separately<sup>16</sup>) (WP I, 624ff.), cf. OP *daraniya-*, Av. *zaranya-* (\**ǵhl-en-iio*) ‘gold’, MP *zaren*, NP *zar*, *zarrin* ‘golden’, KhS *ysaruna* ‘yellow, red, golden, green’, Sogd. *zr̥wn* ‘k’. The name of this *gāhambār*s survived in the MP language: *medyōzarm* ‘spring’.

### Autumn

The word for ‘year’ *sāl*, widely spread in all Iranian world, derives from Old Iranian \**sarəda*, which was originally also a name of one of two recognized then seasons (Av. *sarəd-*, OP *θard-* ‘year’, Oss. *sard* ‘summer’, OInd. *śarad-* (f.) ‘autumn’). Ir. \**sarəda*, both in Avestan and Old Persian had a meaning ‘cold’ and ‘year’: Av. *sarəda-*, *sarəta-* ‘cold’, *sarəd* (f.) ‘year’, OP *θard-* ‘year’ (B 1566). These forms derive from PIE adjective \**kel-to* ‘cold, warm’. Av *sa-*

<sup>16</sup> See K. Maciuszak, Notes on etymology of the New Persian colour names, *SEC* 1 (1996), p. 34-5.

*rəḍa* ‘bringing cold’ is a reminiscence of times of Indo-Iranian community, who recognized two seasons: cold \**žham* (of ten months) and hot \**ham*. For them \**šarad* was probably a name of a certain period of time (not necessarily of season), that began the winter, the period that ‘brings cold’. According to Taqizadeh, first Aryans used to celebrate then beginning of the year. Also, the beginning of the Persian year *θard-* was near to the autumnal equinox. Much later, the New Year’s day was fixed near to the vernal equinox, namely the month *θura.vāhara*. Thus in Old Iranian languages *sarəd-* first denoted only ‘cold season’, but then also ‘hot season’ and *pars pro toto* ‘year’. Nowadays in Iranian languages this word has numerous continuations: NP *sard* ‘cold’, Pashto *soṛ*, KhS *sada*, Oss. *sæln* ‘freeze’ (cf. Skr. *śiśira* ‘cold time’, Lith. *šalti* ‘to freeze’), and also in the meaning ‘year’: Sogd. *srδ*, MP, NP, Kurd., Pashto *sāl*, KhS *sala* (*-rd-* changed into *-l-*), Par. *saṛ*, Wakhi *wuserd*, Yaz. *asud*. There is no doubt that this word denoted first ‘the cold season’, although not as cold as *zyam*. Ir. *sarəda* was the name for autumn (September-October) among the people who moved southwards and found the climate there more pleasant, much warmer. Thus, Skr. *śarad-* ‘autumn, harvest’ (cf. Lat. *calidus* ‘hot’, Lith. *šilus* ‘August’) and in some Western Iranian languages (perhaps Indian influence) one can also trace this secondary, for Iranian, meaning: Oss. *særda* ‘summer’, KhS *pašā* ‘autumn’, *pasālā* ‘spring’ < \**pa-sarda* ‘near the summer’, Luri *sārdāwa* ‘autumn’, Pashto *psarlay* ‘spring’ (< \**upa-sarda-ka*), MP and NP *afsālān/absālān* ‘early spring’ < \**upa-sarda*. Khotan-Saka gives us many evidences that in Western Iranian languages *sarda* must have been used earlier than *hama* (Skr. *sāmā* ‘summer’, almost exclusively in the meaning ‘year’, the name for ‘summer’ was derived from other adjective *grīṣma*, NP *garm* ‘warm’. In Khotanese spring was called *pasālā* ‘next to the summer’, and summer *hamāna*. If *hamana* had been earlier, the name for ‘spring’ would have rather been \**pa-hamana*. The Eastern Iranian languages, which existed and developed in neighbourhood of the languages and dialects belonging to the Indian and Dardic families, were influenced by them and that is why they differ considerably in many respects from those spoken in the West of Iranian world. The difference between them, resulting in various nomenclatures of seasons and also the division of the year, is a consequence of climatic conditions and numerous reforms of local calendars. Nowadays those differences become evident when we compare names of the same seasons in New Persian (Western Iranian) and Pashto (Eastern Iranian). In these languages, only the names for ‘winter’ mean and denote one and the same season of the year. In Pashto *woṛo* (NP *bahār* ‘spring’) denotes ‘summer’, and *manai* (etymologically ‘summer’, the same as NP *hamin*, replaced then by *tābestān*) denotes ‘autumn’. This ‘one-season shift’ in Pashto was due to the fact that the archaic form *psarlai* < \**upa-sarda-ka* ‘near to summer’ had been retained. Also very important factor was the influence of Dardic and Kafir languages (spoken in North-Eastern Afghanistan, i.e. Nuristan, Northern Paki-



stan and Kashmir), where ‘autumn’ is called: *soro*, *sorwai*, *sare* < \**sarad*, while ‘summer’: *wahend*, *wosunt* < \**vasanta*.

In later times the Iranians started to complete the circle of the year with four seasons: spring (*vahār*), summer (*hamin*, later: *tābestān*), autumn (*pātīz*) and winter (*zam*, later: *zamistān*). In the case of *pāyīz*, the principle of nomenclature is different: the first three names are derived from climatic phenomena, *pāyīz* literally means: ‘before, next to winter’, or maybe derives its meaning from one of the *gāhambārs* (old pagan festivals of the pastoral year) *paitīshahya* ‘(feast of) bringing in the corn, harvest’.

NP *pāīz* ‘autumn’, MP *pādēz* (earlier form: \**pātēz*) for the first time appears in the *Bundahishn* (XXV.20). This name can be found neither in Avesta nor in Old Persian inscriptions. It is relatively late, as originated in the MP period. It can be traced to \**pati-zya* ‘near, close to, before winter’ (Av. *pati-*, OP *patiy-*, Gr. *ποτί*, NP *be* ‘to, at, near’, PIE \**po-ti* (P. 842), and *zya-* ‘winter’). The development of this form must have been as follows: \**patiy-zya* > \**pātēz* > \**pādēz* > *pāyīz* (*ē* is the result of contraction \**iy*, OIr. *-t-* became voiced in this position in Middle Iranian period, the change *-d-* > *-y-* is much later, cf. NP *pāy* < OP *pāda-*). The meaning of this word is attested by KhS *paśa* ‘autumn’ (Bailey 222), Sogd. \**pty’z*, Oss. *fazzæg* < \**pati-zya-ka* (\**fajzyak*, *jz* > *zz*, *faj* < \**pati*), Sar. *pīj*, Kurd. *pāīz* ‘autumn’, Luri *pāīz* ‘summer’ (*sardāvā* ‘autumn’ consists of two summer months: *mordad*, *šahrivar*, and the first month of autumn *mehr*). In the Eastern Iranian languages, the names for autumn derive from MP *hāmin* ‘summer’, Pashto *manai* (summer: *wōrai*, etym. ‘spring’), Sar. *menj*.

In *Āfrīnagān gāhanbār* another trace of ‘autumn’ can be found, i.e. the name of one *gāhanbār* is: *paitīshahya* ‘feast of bringing in the corn’ (Av. *hahya-* ‘corn, seed’, Skr. *sasya-*, PIE \**sasjo* P. 880), which was celebrated near autumn solstice (12-16 September). If we consider that Avestan *ž* (then MP *z*), could have developed also from *š* before vowels and voiced consonants (*sandhi*), this MP *pātēz* can be traced to the name of this *gāhanbār*. Moreover, in numerous commentaries to Avesta and its Middle Persian translation written in Avestan script (*pazand*) we find \**pātēž* (cf. Av. *duš*, *duz* ‘bad’, *duž-da*, NP *dozd* ‘thief’). So, if *pāyīz* really had derived from \**pati-zya-* ‘next to winter’, then why it would not have been built by analogy of the name of spring, known in Eastern Iranian languages, which was also a transition period (climacteric season), and its name was created with the preposition *upa-*: \**upa-sarda* ‘next to summer’ (KhS *pasa*, Pashto *psarlai*).

In Indo-European languages, the names for ‘winter’, ‘spring’ and ‘summer’ are cognate with words for ‘cold’, ‘hot’, ‘bright’, etc. For ‘autumn’, unlike the names of the other seasons, there is no certain agreement between any of the branches of the IE family. Besides the connection with ‘harvest’ (Gr. *ὀπώρα* ‘fruit-season’), words for ‘autumn’ may mean lit. ‘before, next to winter’ (Czech *podzim* ‘pre-winter’) or ‘end of summer’ (Br. *dilost-hañv*), or may refer

to the fall or the redness of the leaves (Eng. *fall*, Lith. *ruduõ*, Lett. *ruds* ‘red-dish’). This shows us, that ‘autumn’ was the last defined season. This statement could also be confirmed by the above Iranian facts, if one took into consideration only Iranian *\*pati-zya*, which denoted ‘astronomical autumn’. But, having the attested form *\*sarad* (which has survived in all Iranian languages and denoted ‘year’, and in Eastern Iranian ‘hot season’), we can assume that *\*sarad*, even if at the beginning having not been used to denote ‘autumn’, originally meant ‘cold season’.

Language	Winter	Spring	Summer	Autumn	Year
PIE	<i>*ǵhey-: *ǵhi</i>	<i>*ues-r/n-</i>	<i>*sem-</i>	<i>*kel-to</i>	
Avestan	<i>zyam-: zim</i> <i>zayan</i> <i>zəmake</i> <i>yāirya</i> <i>aiwi.gāma-</i>	<i>van̄har-</i> <i>van̄ri</i> (Loc.)  <i>zarmaya</i>	<i>ham-: šm</i> <i>həmna</i>	<i>*sarəda</i>	<i>zəma</i>  <i>sarəd</i>  <i>yār</i>
Old Persian		<i>vāhara-</i>			<i>θard</i> <i>*yār</i>
Sogdian	<i>zm'k</i>	<i>wrty(y)</i>	<i>'mynyy</i>	<i>pty'z</i>	<i>srō</i>
Khotan Saka	<i>ysumi</i>	<i>pasāla</i>	<i>hamāna</i>	<i>paśa</i>	<i>sala</i>
Middle Persian	<i>zamestān</i>	<i>vahār</i> <i>afsālān</i>	<i>hāmin</i> <i>tābestān</i>	<i>pādēz</i>	<i>sāl</i>
New Persian	<i>zamestān</i>	<i>bahār</i> <i>absālān</i>	<i>tābestān</i>	<i>pāyiz</i>	<i>sāl</i>
Kurdish	<i>zamestān</i>	<i>behār</i> <i>vehār</i>	<i>hāvin</i> <i>tāvesān</i>	<i>pāiz</i>	<i>sāl</i>
Pashto	<i>zimai</i> <i>žemai</i>	<i>psarlai</i>	<i>wōrai</i> <i>orai</i>	<i>manai</i>	<i>sāl</i>
Ossetic	<i>zymæg</i>	<i>walzæg</i>	<i>sard</i> <i>sarda</i>	<i>fazzæg</i>	
Sarikoli	<i>zaman</i>	<i>wug</i>	<i>menj</i>	<i>menj</i> <i>pīj</i>	
Shugni (Pamir)	<i>zemistūn</i>	<i>bahōr</i>	<i>tōbistūn</i>	<i>tiramō</i>	<i>sōl</i>

### Abbreviations

**Ar.** – Aryan, **Arm.** – Armenian, **Av.** – Avestan, **B** – Bartholomae (see Bibl.), **Bd.** – Bundahishn, **Br.** – Breton, **BSl.** – Balto-Slavic, **Celt.** – Celtic, **ChSl.** – Church-Slavic, **Eng.** – English, **Germ.** – Germanic, **Gh.** – Gharib (see Bibl.), **Goth.** – Gothic, **Gr.** – Greek, **Hitt.** – Hittite, **IE** – Indo-European, **Ir.** – Iranian, **KEWA** – Mayrhofer (see Bibl.), **KhS** – Khotan-Saka, **Kurd.** – Kurdish, **Lat.** – Latin, **Lett.** – Latvian, **Lith.** – Lithuanian, **MP** – Middle Persian, **NP** – New Persian, **OEng.** – Old English, **OHG** – Old High German, **OInd.** – Old Indian, **OIr.** – Old Iranian, **OP** – Old Persian, **OPruss.** – Old Prussian, **Orm.** – Ormuri, **Oss.** – Ossetic, **P** – Pokorny (see Bibl.), **PAr.** – Proto-Aryan, **Par.** – Parachi, **PIE** – Proto-Indo-European, **Pol.** – Polish, **Sar.** – Sarikoli, **Skr.** – Sanskrit, **Sl.** – Slavic, **Sogd.** – Sogdian, **WP** – Walde & Pokorny (see Bibl.), **Yaz.** – Yazgulami.

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